

STRANGE

# TALES



NO. 20

1957-1958

FOUNDED



10¢

from  
the

# CRYPT



## UNIQUE STONECUTTING GRAVESTONES

ALEX KORDOVA  
PROP.

HERE LIES  
THEODORE  
J. WARREN  
BORN APRIL 23, 1901  
DIED JUNE 5, 1950

NO... NO... IT CAN'T BE! THAT  
NAME HE'S CUTTING ON THE  
GRAVESTONE... THAT'S MY NAME!  
AND MY DATE OF BIRTH! BUT  
THE DATE OF DEATH... THAT'S  
TODAY!



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A. C. M. P.

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205 East 42nd Street, New York 17, New York

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•  
TALES FROM THE CRYPT

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# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S TALE



WELL... HEH, HEH... I SEE IT'S TIME FOR ME TO TELL YOU ANOTHER *SPINE-TINGLING* TALE. ONE OF MY VAST COLLECTION OF *GORIES* WHICH I KEEP HERE IN THE *CRYPT*! THIS STORY IS A FAVORITE OF MINE. ONE THAT I GUARANTEE WILL MAKE YOUR BLOOD RUN COOL AND YOUR HAIR STAND ON END! I CALL IT...

## THE THING FROM THE SEA!



YOU ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN A *FRIGHTFUL* ADVENTURE... CONCERNING A LUXURIOUS OCEAN LINER AND THE STRANGE AND UNEXPLAINED EVENTS THAT WILL OCCUR IN

STATEROOM 13!

YOU ARE ON A CROWDED PIER IN NEW YORK TRYING TO SECURE PASSAGE ON THE "OCEAN QUEEN" BOUND FOR ENGLAND? THE TRIP IS URGENT, AND YOU ARE PLEADING WITH THE PURSER...

BUT YOU MUST HAVE ONE BERTH OPEN... I'LL TAKE ANY CLASS!

WELL, AS A MATTER OF FACT, SIR... THAT IS... IF YOU'RE NOT SUPERSTITIOUS.



WHAT WONDERFUL LUCK! ONLY ONE OF THE TWO BERTHS IN STATEROOM 13 HAS BEEN TAKEN! YOU MAY THE PURSER AND BOARD THE SHIP! AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON... FOR AS YOU REACH THE TOP OF THE GANGPLANK...

CAST OFF THE FORWARD LINE!

MAKE READY FOR DEPARTURE!

LAST CALL... ALL ABOARD THAT'S GOING ABOARD!



YOU WATCH AS THE DOOR SLITS AWAY, THE LITTLE TUGS STRAINING AND PUSHING THE GIANT LINER OUT INTO MIDSTREAM? THEN...

WHY I TAKE YOUR BARS AND SHOW YOU TO YOUR CABIN, SIR?

WHY THANK YOU, STEWARD?



AH... WHAT NUMBER STATEROOM DO YOU HAVE, SIR?

WHY... IS?



THE COLOR DRAINS FROM THE STEWARD'S CHEEKS... HIS EYES FILL WITH HORROR AS HE STARES AT YOU...

WHY, WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE, STEWARD?

OH... ER... NOTHING, SIR... NOTHING!



THE STEWARD SETS YOUR BAGS DOWN IN YOUR STATE-ROOM, CHECKS THE PORTHOLE TO SEE THAT IT IS SECURELY BOLTED, AND THEN GOES TOWARD THE DOOR! THERE IS A GLOOM OF FEAR ON HIS FACE...

WHAT IS IT, OLD MAN? WHAT IS THERE ABOUT THIS CABIN THAT FRIGHTENS YOU?

I... I DON'T KNOW, ONLY... ONLY...



NO ONE WHO HAS EVER BEEN ASSIGNED THIS CABIN HAS COMPLETED HIS CROSSING IN IT! SOMETHING... SOMEBODY... FRIGHTENS THEM INTO LEAVING IT! WHY ONE PASSENGER EVEN WENT MAD FROM WHAT HE SAW HERE.

WHAT...? WHAT DID THEY SEE? TELL ME!



THE STEWARD MUMBLES SOMETHING ABOUT GHOSTS AND SLIPS FROM YOUR GRASP! YOU WATCH AS HE HURRIES DOWN THE CORRIDOR, AND THEN YOU CLOSE THE DOOR.

GHOSTS... BAH! HE'S PROBABLY PLAYING A TRICK ON ME. SUGGESTION AND STUFF.



YOU STOW YOUR BELONGINGS IN YOUR ASSIGNED BERTH AND SURVEY THE CABIN! IT IS SMALL, WITH ONE PORTHOLE... AND THE TWO BERTHS.

HMMM! I WONDER WHO HAS THE UPPER? HIS BAGGAGE IS HERE! HE'S PROBABLY UPON DECK SAYING GOODBYE TO THE GOOD-OLD U.S.A.!



AFTER DINNOR YOU DECIDE TO TUCKER UP! YOU ARE TIRED, AND THE FRESH SEA AIR HAS MADE YOU SLEEPY.

OH, HELLO! I GUESS YOU MUST BE MY ROOM-MATE! BLAST! MEET YOU!

SAME HERE! RATHER SMALL STATE-ROOM, ISN'T IT? I HAD TO TAKE IT... ONLY ONE LEFT!



YES... THAT'S WHAT THEY TOLD ME! WELL... GUESS I'LL TUCKER UP! I'M PRETTY TIRED!

ME, TOO! BLAST YOU'RE HERE, THOUGH! THE STEWARD TOLD ME SOME ANFUL YARN ABOUT THE ROOM.



OH, I WOULDN'T TAKE IT SERIOUSLY! HE'S PROBABLY PULLING YOUR LEGS!

YES, WELL... GOOD-NIGHT!



YOU DON'T KNOW HOW LONG YOU'VE BEEN ASLEEP. ONLY... SUDDENLY YOUR EYES ARE OPEN! YOUR STATE-ROOM SMELLS STRANGE! THE PECULIAR SMELL OF DAMPNESS... STALE SEA-WATER! AND YOU ARE COLD... A BUSH OF AIR IS COMING FROM THE OPEN PORTHOLE.

BLAST! THE PORTHOLE IS OPEN! I'D BETTER CLOSE IT OR RISK A NASTY COLO!



YOU GET UP AND STUMBLE TO THE PORTHOLE IN THE DARKNESS! THE BOLTS HAVE BEEN LOOSENED AND THE FIRE SPRAY FROM THE SEA WETS YOUR FACE! YOU BLAM IT SHUT, BOLTING IT TIGHTLY! AND THEN, FROM THE BERTH ABOVE YOURS, COMES A BLOOD-CURLING CRY.



WHAT THE...?

WITH A SINGLE LEAP, YOUR ROOMMATE SPRINGS FROM HIS BERTH TO THE FLOOR AND DASHES MADLY TOWARD THE STATEROOM DOOR...

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG? NO! NO! NO!



YOU LISTEN TO HIS FOOTSTEPS RUNNING FULL SPEED DOWN THE CORRIDOR? POOR OLD BOY? PROBABLY NAUSEIC? YOU SHUT THE DOOR AND GROPE YOUR WAY BACK TO YOUR BERTH? YOUR EYES CLOSE AND YOU SLEEP AGAIN? THEN, DURING THE EARLY MORNING HOURS, YOU ARE AWAKENED BY A GROAN...

MMMM? NOT A VERY GOOD SAILOR. POOR CHAP? LISTEN TO HIM MOAN



THE NEXT MORNING, THE SUN STREAMING THROUGH THE PORTHOLE AWAKENS YOU AND YOU DRESS QUICKLY. THE CURTAINS OF THE UPPER BERTH ARE DRAWN... YOU LEAVE WITHOUT OBTAINING YOUR ROOMMATE...

ON DECK, THE SHIP'S DOCTOR STOPS YOU...

NO! WE HAVE HIM IN THE SHIP'S HOSPITAL. IF HE'S SUFFERING FROM SHOCK? CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT HE SAW THAT MIGHT HAVE CAUSED IT?

...I WONDER IF YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT? WE FOUND YOUR ROOMMATE COWERING IN A PASSAGE, BAWLING LIKE AN INFANT?

WHA... YOU MEAN... HE DIDN'T COME BACK TO THE STATEROOM?

...I HAVE NO IDEA!



...PROBABLY ISN'T IN THE MOOD FOR BREAKFAST ANYWAY?



LOOK? I HAVE A LARGE SARK? WHY DON'T YOU BRING YOUR THINGS OVER THERE AND SPEND THE REST OF YOUR TOP WITH ME?

OH, REALLY, DOCTOR? ARE YOU IMPLYING THAT THE RUMORS ABOUT STATEROOM 13 ARE TRUE?



YOU LAUGH, REFUSING THE DOCTOR'S INVITATION? YOU SPEND THE DAY RELAXING IN YOUR DECK-CHAIR... SWIMMING IN THE SHIP'S POOL... AND PLAYING CARDS IN THE GAME ROOM AFTER DINNER? IT IS VERY LATE WHEN YOU RETURN TO YOUR ROOM...



HO-HUM? GAD, I'M TIRED? THAT BERTH CERTAINLY LOOKS INVITING?

YOU CHECK THE PORTHOLE TO SEE THAT IT IS SECURELY BOLTED AND THEN YOU STRETCH OUT ON YOUR BERTH? YOU LAY AWAKE THINKING ABOUT THE AZZORDINE SCREAM OF YOUR ROOMMATE THE NIGHT BEFORE, WHEN

WHAT THE...? THE PORTHOLE IS OPEN AGAIN... AND... PHEW... THAT SMELL OF SEAWATER AND DECAY.



YOU GET UP AND CLOSE IT? YOU ARE FRIGHTENED? YOU DISTINCTLY REMEMBER CHECKING IT BEFORE YOU WENT TO BED? YOU TIGHTEN THE BOLTS WITH ALL OF YOUR STRENGTH AND STAND THERE FOR A WHILE, STARING OUT TO SEA? SILENTLY.

WHAT'S THAT? A MOAN... COMING FROM THE OTHER BERTH...



YOU SPRING TO THE DOOR AND TEAR THE CURTAINS APART... THRUSTING YOUR HANDS IN, TO DISCOVER IF THERE IS ANYONE THERE...

THAT SMELL... THAT NAUSEATING SMELL OF STAGNANT SALT-WATER! AND... AND... AAAAAAH!



YOU TAKE HOLD OF SOMETHING... SOMETHING COLD AND WET... ICEY COLD... SOMETHING LIKE A MAN'S ARM? AND AS YOU PULL, THE CREATURE HURLS ITSELF FROM THE BERTH... A CLANNY, GOOZY MASS!

KEEP AWAY!  
KEEP AWAY!



IN AN INSTANT, THE HORRIBLE MONSTROUSITY HAS BARRED OUT OF THE STATEROOM DOOR?

GOOD LORD? SO THAT'S WHAT IT IS! I'LL FOLLOW IT!



YOU CHASE THE DARK SHADOW THROUGH THE DIMLY LIT PASSAGE, AND UP TO THE COMPANIONWAY?

BLASTED THING!  
IT'S GETTING AWAY!



YOU WATCH AS IT SEEMS TO GO OVER THE RAIL AND INTO THE SEA...

I... MUST BE DREAMING! THAT CURSED MEAL TONIGHT... IT... IT DON'T AGREE WITH ME!



YOU CANNOT RETURN TO THAT HORRIBLE ROOM! SO YOU WALK THE DECK, FINALLY CURLING UP IN A DECK CHAIR UNDER A STEAMER BLANKET TO SLEEP A DREAMLESS SLEEP! THE MORNING SUN BLINDS YOU AS YOU ARE SHAKEN AWAKE...

Oh... it... it is YOU, CAPTAIN!

I WENT TO YOUR STATEROOM! YOU WEREN'T THERE! IS ANYTHING WRONG?

WELL, FRANKLY, CAPTAIN, THERE IS! SOMETHING VERY HORRIBLE HAPPENED IN MY STATEROOM LAST NIGHT! IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN MY IMAGINATION BUT...

WHY DON'T YOU LET ME FIX YOU UP IN THE OFFICERS' QUARTERS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TRIP?

LOOK HERE CAPTAIN! CAN'T WE GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS? THERE *MUST* BE A LOGICAL EXPLANATION!

YOU ARE RIGHT, SIR! ONLY, WHAT CAN I DO? I'M INCLINED TO BE A LOGICAL EXPLANATION!

THAT WILL SOLVE NOTHING! PERHAPS IT MIGHT BE A STOWAWAY... TRYING TO RUSHEN PEOPLE OUT OF THAT STATEROOM SO THAT HE CAN SPEND THE REMAINDER OF THE TRIP IN COMFORT & BANISH PERHAPS?

THINK! THAT THOUGHT HAD NEVER OCCURED TO ME! YOU MAY BE RIGHT! I TELL YOU WHAT!

TONIGHT, I WILL STAND WATCH WITH YOU! IF HE SHOWS HIS FACE, WE'LL BE ABLE TO OVERFIND HIM... TOGETHER!

GOOD, CAPTAIN! I'M GLAD YOU ARE TAKING A MORE REALISTIC ATTITUDE THAN YOUR SUPERSTITIOUS CREW!

YOU ARE RELIEVED THAT YOU WILL NOT HAVE TO SPEND ANOTHER NIGHT *ALONE* IN THAT ACCURSED STATEROOM! TOGETHER WITH THE CAPTAIN, TONIGHT YOU MAY SOLVE THIS BAFFLING PROBLEM!

YOUR DAY IS SPENT ANXIOUSLY... AND TOWARDS EVENING, YOU FIND YOURSELF BECOMING NERVOUS! FINALLY, IT IS TEN O'CLOCK... AND YOU MAKE YOUR WAY DOWN TO THE STATEROOM!

SEE YOU THEN, AT ABOUT TEN!

YES... STATEROOM 317!

AN, CAPTAIN! RIGHT ON TIME I SEE!

LET'S GO NOW!



YOU CHECK THE PORTHOLE. YOU AND THE CAPTAIN. AND MAKE SURE THAT IT'S TIGHTLY BOLTED.

I'LL SIT HERE ON THE BERTH! WHY DON'T YOU SIT THERE ON MY WALISE...

GOOD! NOW... SHALL WE TURN OUT THE LIGHT.



THE ROOM IS DARK! ONLY THE HORN OF THE ENGINE IS HEARD, FAR BELOW, AND THE MUFFLED ROAR OF THE SEA, OUTSIDE! SUDDENLY



YOU RUSH TO THE PORTHOLE AND SLAM IT SHUT! SOME STRANGE FORCE SEEMS TO RESIST YOU

HERE WE GO, CAPTAIN! THINGS ARE BEGINNING TO POP!

I... I...  
AAAAAHH!



YOU SPIN AROUND! THE *FRONT*, THE HORRIBLE CREATURE OF LAST NIGHT IS RISING OUT OF THE TOP BERTH! THE CAPTAIN IS SPRING BACK...

THAT'S... THAT'S IT! LET'S GET IT, CAPTAIN!

NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE YOU... YOU'RE DEAD! I MURDERED YOU!



I KILLED YOU... RIGHT THERE... IN THAT BERTH! PUSHED YOU OUT THAT PORTHOLE INTO THE SEA! YOU CAN'T BE... YOU CAN'T...



HORRIFIED, YOU WATCH! THE CAPTAIN SLUMPS TO THE FLOOR... WHITE AS CHALK! THEN, SATISFIED, THE *FRONT* TURNS AND HURLS ITSELF OUT OF THE PORTHOLE...

GOOD LORD!



THE CAPTAIN IS DEAD... LITERALLY FRIGHTENED TO DEATH! AND AS YOU TURN TO LOOK AFTER THE THING, YOU ARE ASTOUNDED TO SEE THAT

THE PORTHOLE IS CLOSED AND BOLTED!



WELL, HEH! AND THAT'S THE STORY, DEAR READER! THE CAPTAIN RECEIVED THE SHOCK OF HIS LIFE, BUT WELL, HE SHOULD HAVE REALIZED... YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH MURDER... NOT EVEN AT SEA... ON YOUR OWN SHIP! OH, BY THE WAY! IF YOU EVER REALLY GAIL, THE "OCEAN QUEEN," ASK FOR STATEROOM THIRTEEN! TELL 'EM I SENT YOU!



IF YOU LIKE MY TALES AND HAVE TIME TO SPARE... SEND ME A FEW LINES! WRITE TO: THE GUY-FOR-KEEPER, RM. 79-1, DEPT. 69, 225 LANSHETTE ST., NYC 10, N.Y.

## END OF THE SEARCH

The sun had already gone down behind the heavy jungle growth along both banks of the sluggish stream, when Canady beached his flimsy boat and staggered ashore. A hundred yards back from the swampy water's edge was a village he had never seen before... a primitive circle of weathered huts he hadn't known existed on this unmapped offshoot of the Amazon River. But there was good reason why it had escaped his notice during all the time he had been managing the Plantation. In his fifteen years in the tropics, he had never before ventured so far into Brazil's interior.

Canady was led to a man's hut by a young boy belonging to the village chief, and camped with the manners of the people. What time he gave only passing notes to the grim-faced natives who had escorted him here from his boat... hardly noticed the cold and appraising eyes that watched him settle on the hard floor opposite the Chief.

"They don't like my being here," Canady thought to himself as he pretended to rearrange his belt, his fingers moving instinctively to make certain that his revolver was in its holster, just in case. "They're an ugly-looking bunch... and they hate my hanging into their village so much as I hate being here! But there's no choice... I've got to find a clue to Drucker's whereabouts!"

In the language of the jungle people Can-

ady spoke... sometimes searching for words to express himself, sometimes in a surge of blind anger... his plantation foreman... had disappeared a week before on an inspection trip, but vanished from sight as if swallowed up by the earth. He had come to find out... would pay anyone who knew where Drucker was. Had they seen a tall man with red hair... a man who had a flame-colored moustache?

One of the guides rose from behind him, and in the evening silence Canady watched him cross the hut to the door. Watched the native's feet as it passed momentarily over a grass mat and moved a few inches from its former resting place.

There was an object hidden under the mat and Canady looked around, wondering whether the man and his primitive tribesman realized he had seen it. Canady began to rise, groping for his gun... and his hand trembled as it touched the empty holster. They knew... they had watched his face when he had seen the object!

And even as they began to close in on him, from all sides of the hut, Canady was reminded of the shrunken human head there on the floor, underneath the grass mat that had been moved... the head with the red hair looking so ludicrous over the shrivelled skin... the head with the bushy flame-colored moustache!

THERE WERE FOUR OF THEM. RICH, SPOILED, BORED! THEY HAD ALL THE MONEY THEY WANTED, THEY HAD BEEN EVERYWHERE AND DONE EVERYTHING! AND SO, WHEN SOMEONE SUGGESTED THAT THEY TRY THE MAGIC OF THE ANCIENTS, THEY BREWED...

# *a* FATAL CAPER!



IT WAS BREEN BOGARDOM THAT MADE MARLYN ANDERS BUY THE DUSTY OLD BOOK IN THE DUSTY OLD BOOKSTORE...

A BOOK ON MAGIC? HOW BROADENLY SELF?

PLEASE DO NOT TRY ANY OF THE SPELLS IN IT, MISS. I'VE HEARD THAT... THEY ACTUALLY... *WFO-KT*



PETER, DO YOU SEE *THAT*? I'VE GOT IT JUST TOO *DUCKY*? CALL UP JIM AND WINNIE, THIS INSTANT! I'VE GOT THEM OVER...

WHAT BOOK? YOU DON'T TAKE ANY STOCK IN *THAT* JUNK, DO YOU? OH, WELL... *WFO-KT* WHYRE IT'LL BE BETTER THAN SITTING AROUND LISTENING TO SOMEBODY'S POEMS...



THAT NIGHT, IN JIM ROBERT'S ROOMS, THE FOUR GOT TOGETHER WITH DREAMS OF LAUGHTER...

BABY, IT TOOK ME HOURS TO GET THESE THINGS!

WHERE'D YOU EVER DREAM UP ALL THIS, HARTLYND TOADS' TONGUES? A LAMPING'S BART! THE FOOT OF A OAT-OLD BAR!

IT GIVES ME THE GREENS BIT... I LOVE IT! HA! HA!

FIRST THE HAIR OF A BABY MOUSE...

THE NAILS OF A DOG BORN DEAD...

THEN THE WING OF A BABY BAT!



WE'RE ALL SICK OF EVERYTHING! I THOUGHT THAT WE COULD TRY SOME MAGIC SPELLS... OLD SPELLS WORKED BY GALILEO AND DEE! THEY WON'T WORK, OF COURSE... BUT IT WILL BE FUN TO TRY...



NOW TIP OF EAR AND SPIT OF TONGUE! NOSE FROM A DEAD MAN'S GRAVE!

FINGER OF DUST FROM A MUMMY CASE!



STIR, STIR! WHISPER WORDS TO TOUCH THE EAR...

RELTANE... HOO'S BANE!

DOG'S TOOTH, WITCH'S RUM...



AAAAAGHHH! LOOK!

OH, MY...



WHA... WHAT WAS IT? I... I DIDN'T SEE...

SOME MONSTER, WANT AN ANSWER, THEN... HELP ME! MARPLEM... YOU ALL RIGHT? BRITLYN... ANSWER ME!



LOUD IN THE DARK ROOM, MARYLYN SCREAMS! HER HANDS BEAT UP AT SOMETHING VAST, UNSEEN! HER GREEN-TINTED FACE WRITHES BERSERLY IN STARK TERROR.

GOT TO HAVE LIGHT! GOT TO KNOW WHO, WHAT HAPPENED.

L-LOOK! MARYLYN'S SHOE... AND STOMPING.

WHATEVER... IT WAS, MUST HAVE RIPPED HER... RIGHT OUT OF THEM!

MARYLYN! OH MY POOR, DEAR MARYLYN.

EEEEYYAAGHH!!



LET'S GET OUT OF HERE! CALL THE POLICE! GET HELP FROM SOMEBODY!

JIM! JIM, NO! LISTEN.

WE CAN GET HER BACK OURSELVES, OLD MAN! RELAX! RELAX! MAYBE IT'S JUST A MATTER OF ANOTHER SPELL OR SOMETHING.

I DON'T LIKE THIS! MAYBE IN A SIZZY, OR SOMETHING, BUT THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS LIKE THIS THAT SCIENCE HAS NEVER EXPLAINED! WE'D BETTER.

OH, JIM DARLING, HUSH UP! WE HAVE TO SAVE MARYLYN OURSELVES!

OUR FAULT, OLD MAN! HERE, THE LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING A SCIENCE TO SPEAK TO THE DEAD!



THIS IS CRAZY! WHY DO WE EVER START THIS? LISTEN, I

KEEP YOUR HANDS STEADY, JIM!

STOP SHAKING, OLD MAN! CONCENTRATE! CONCENTRATE ON MARYLYN.

PEEETEEARR... PLEEEAAASE COOOOME TOOOO ME!

IT'S MARYLYN! SHE'S CALLING TO ME!

OH, MY HEAVEN! OHHHH





JIM! GIVE ME A HAND! HELP ME! SOMETHING HAS HOLD OF ME. CAN'T SEEM TO FIGHT IT OFF!

JIM, HOLD ME! I'M SO... SO SCARED!



AAAGGGHHH!

HE'S GONE, TOO! ONLY HIS COAT-SLEEVE RIPPED OFF! NOW I AM GOING FOR THE POLICE! THIS HAS GONE TOO FAR...



NO! NO! NOT THE POLICE! I WON'T STAY HERE ALONE! JIM, YOU AND I... WE CAN DO IT BY A DIFFERENT SPELL!

WIKKE, YOU'RE CRAZY! LET GO OF ME! PLEASE... CALM DOWN!



LISTEN TO ME! I WON'T LET YOU GO FOR THE POLICE! WE STARTED ALL THIS! WE CAN FRISHT! BUT YOU MUST HELP ME! JIM!

ALL... RIGHT! I'LL DO WHATEVER I CAN...



HEERLF USSSS LDDOON IRRN THREE SDDOOR.

DO YOU HEAR? THEY ARE CALLING TO US... FROM OVER YONDER... FROM SOMEWHERE BEYOND THE GRAVE.



I DON'T LIKE IT BUT I'LL GO THROUGH WITH IT.

STEADY, NOW! I'M GOING TO READ THE SPELL.



BY THE SECRETS OF THE NINE, BY THE SWORD OF SANECH AND THE SPHINX CHARIOT! BY THE BAPTISM OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS AND THE KEYS OF THE FIFTY GATES... I SUMMON YOU! APPEAR! BRING BACK THOSE YOU HAVE TAKEN!



HIS NERVES EXCERBATED, JIM COLLAPSES IN A DEAD FAINT? HE DOES NOT SEE THE MONSTROUS HORROR BEING OVER HIM..



DOES NOT FEEL HIMSELF BEING LIFTED AND CARRIED.



JIM OPENS HIS EYES, TO FIND HIMSELF RECLINING IN A COFFIN.. JUST AS THE SLOATING MONSTER IS SHUTTING THE HEAVY LID DOWN ON HIM?

NO... NO? DON'T... DON'T...!



WITH A THUD, THE COFFIN CLOSES?



HE'S HAMMERING ME IN.. CAN HEAR THE HAMMER.. BITTING THE NAILS.. SUFFOCATE.. IN HERE.. GETTING HARDER TO BREATHE.

ALL RIGHT, PETE? THE JOKE'S DONE FAR ENOUGH? HE LOOKED HALF DEAD WITH FEAR, IN THAT COFFIN. LET'S OPEN IT UP!

SURE, RIGHT AWAY? BOY, WAS HE EVER SCARED!

JIM GURE FELL FOR ALL THAT HUMBO-UMBO! WHEEE!



STUFF'S STUCK! I-I CAN'T GET IT! IT'S STUCK!

PETE? JIM WILL, BESIDES.. WE SUFFOCATE TOOK A BODY OUT TO MAKE ROOM FOR HIM? WE'VE GOT TO PUT IT BACK! COME ON FACE TO THE CAR, WE'LL GET SOME TOOLS!



YOU'RE HERE, MISTER? AND YOU CAN REST ASSURED.. I GOING TO BURY YOU... DEEP!





HIS NERVES EXACERBATED, JIM COLLAPSES IN A DEAD FAINT? HE DOES NOT SEE THE MONSTROUS HORROR BEING OVER HIM..



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JIM SURE FELL FOR ALL THAT HUMBO-UMBO? WHEEE?



STUFF'S STUCK! I-I CAN'T GET IT UNSTUCK!

PETE? JIM WILL SUFFOCATE IN THERE? WE TOOK A BODY OUT TO MAKE ROOM FOR HIM?

WE'VE GOT TO PUT IT BACK? COME ON FACE TO THE CAR, WE'LL GET SOME TOOLS?



YOU'RE HERE, MISTER? AND YOU CAN REST ASSURED.. I GOING TO BURY YOU... DEEP!



IT WORKED OUT PERFECTLY! ALL THOSE SCENIC EFFECTS, SMOKE AND THINGS... BUT WE'VE GOT TO GET THAT COFFIN OPEN!

PETER, HURRY!

I AM, I AM! SOOO BREF, I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO HAPPEN TO JIM EITHER, YOU KNOW!

WE'VE GOT TO WORK FAST! SOMEBODY'S LIABLE TO FIND THE DEAD BODY WE TOOK OUT OF THAT COFFIN AND CARRIED AWAY...

USERR... DON'T REMIND ME! MY HANDS FEEL FUNNY JUST AT THE PROSPECT OF IT!

LOOK! THE COFFIN IS GONE!

YOU DON'T SUPPOSE ANYONE WAS SUPPOSED TO *BURY* THAT COFFIN

THIS IS HORRIBLE! JIM WILL BE BURIED ALIVE!

NO, NO! WE CAN STOP THAT! HURRY! WE HAVE TO FIND IT...

NOT OVER HERE!

NOBODY HERE, EITHER! WINKIE, DO YOU SEE ANYONE DIGGING A GRAVE?

NO! NO, I DON'T! BUT WE MUST FIND JIM! WE HAVE TO...

Half an hour later...

CARETAKER... DID YOU JUST BURY A COFFIN?

UP! YOU HAVE TO *DIG IT UP!* THE MAN IN IT *ISN'T DEAD!*

WHAT WINKIE MEANS IS... A JOKE! YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT TO OPEN THAT COFFIN!

I WOULDN'T OPEN THAT COFFIN FOR ALL THE GOLD IN FORT KNOX! I BURED HIM PLENTY DEE... THAT MAN DIED FROM... *LEPROSY!* ANYONE WHO TOUCHED THE CORPSE WILL GET IT!



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ANOTHER  
"NEW TREND"  
SURE-FIRE WINNER!



**ON SALE NOW**  
**AT ALL NEWSSTANDS!**

## BACKFIRE

Ever since she insisted on buying the dog, he had hated the big golden animal his wife brought into the house! As far back as he could remember he had been afraid of dogs, even the tiny wriggling pups he saw in the Pet Shop windows... but this monster she had brought home was huge, even for a Great Dane!

The savage hate he felt toward the dog she called Hamlet grew with each passing day... and the hate was matched by his awful fear! Fear which multiplied until the mere sight of the animal was enough to start the cold chills running down his spine! And what was most frightening of all was his realization that his hatred was returned by Hamlet! If he wasn't careful... well, the dog was tremendously powerful...

It was all set... his wife would be away from the house for several hours! With meticulous care he examined the basement room he had hord up... the room with no means of escape! The metal tub in one corner was all set for the bath he was going to give the dog in a few minutes... Hamlet's last bath!

He examined the pipes leading to the tub. With the faucets removed like this, the water which was even at this moment splashing in

could be turned off only from the outside! And with the lock fixed this way, all he would have to do would be to slam the door and it would be impossible to get out! The plan couldn't fail!

He smiled to himself . . . he would unchain Hamlet from the post right outside and bring him into the room. With the door shut on his way out, and the water running, he would never have to worry about that animal again!

He whirled at the sound behind him, his eyes wide with terror! The door to the little room had slammed shut . . . and the water . . . there was no way to turn it off from in here!

. . . . .

Even standing on tip-toes on the edge of the tub the water reached almost to his lips! There was scarcely six inches left between the ceiling and the surface of the water! By tilting his head far back he was able to keep the air trickling in through his nostrils . . . but the water was rising by the second! For the hundredth time he screamed, at the top of his lungs: "H-HELP! HAMLET! HELP!"

But the only sound he could hear in response was the arrush of water . . . the flood that was even now beginning to surge up to his ears . . . into his mouth . . . pounding against his tightly-shut eyes!

He opened his mouth for a last scream for help . . . and there was the brassing impact of his head sinking the cement ceiling! There was no air left in the flooded room . . . even the surging sound of the water had stopped! All he could hear was a thin bubbling sound . . . which seemed to start deep in his strangling throat . . .



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# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER



Drag over that battered COFFIN, kiddies, and stretch your palpitating CORPSES on the worm-eaten lid . . . (Being very careful, of course, not to jar the worm-eaten contents!) . . . as it's once again time for another of our GRAVE discussions! The first item on my musty old list of things to DIG UP with you is the NEW TITLE of my now familiar magazine! As you no doubt are aware, my magazine has always been tops in TERROR . . . the first word in HORROR . . . and unsurpassed in SUSPENSE! So when my frightened publisher first agreed to publish my tales . . . which I keep here in the CRYPT . . . we called the magazine THE CRYPT OF TERROR! Later, however, the old coo's ulcer has been eating up, and every time I've bandaged him, the latest issue, his seeing the word TERROR in the title has given him a bad case of hiccupus! This, naturally, aggravated the old boy's tummy even more . . . so for his sake, as well as for the sakes of all my readers with weak tummies, I reluctantly agreed to change the title of my TERROR-IFIC mag to TALES FROM THE CRYPT! But do not be alarmed, all you FIENDISH FANS! To paraphrase a phrase, a CORPSE by any other name is still a CORPSE! And let me assure you, THE CRYPT OF TERROR by any other name will still be . . . ah . . . TERROR-ABLE! Now let's dig into the MAIL MAUSOLEUM . . . which is CHOKED full of your epistolary gems . . . and peruse a few! (God, did I say THAT?)

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I hate to admit this, you old geezer, but your magazine is the very best HORROR-TERROR book I have ever read—barring none! I have an almost complete collection of THE CRYPT OF TERROR. However, I do not have issues No. 4, No. 9, and No. 16. I wrote to your publisher for them, and he informed me that these particular issues were sell-outs! So I am appealing to you. Please print this letter in your "corner." I will offer to pay as high as 75c apiece to anyone who can send me these issues in good condition!

Ed Beep  
10 Ocean Parkway  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

O.K. Ed, there's your letter . . . good luck! For 75c apiece, I'd send you my own personal copies . . . but I've never kept them! Can't stand to have them around . . . they scare the daylight outa me!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I want you to know that everytime a CRYPT OF TERROR is put on sale at my candy-store, I will buy it and will HAUNT you. You don't scare me!

A. (NMI) Ghost  
(No address given!)

So haunt me, Ghost! I dare you! Only you better not show up around the CRYPT! I might scare the SHEET off you! Go dissolve your ectoplasm in a vat of sulphuric acid!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Your magazine leaves me cold!

The Occupant of Slab 13  
City Morgue Refrigerator  
Dodge City, Kansas

Why don't you give yourself a hot-foot with an acetylene-torch!

## CRYPT-KEEPER'S LITERARY SELECTIONS

A further listing of my favorite fine mystery literature, which you can obtain at your local library!

H. P. Lovecraft. Lurker at the Threshold  
Karloff, Boris. And the Darkness Falls  
Erasm Stoker. The Mystery of the Sea

And so, dear readers, don't forget to tell all your friends about the new title of my magazine . . . I wouldn't want anyone to miss this issue because he was still looking for the CRYPT OF TERROR! And keep your letters pouring in . . . tell me what type of stories you like best! Just write to, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, Rm. 708, Dept. 20, 325 Lafayette Street, N. Y. C. 12, N. Y.

# R... DEATH!

GOOD LORD! DON'T LOOK AT IT, MISS BENNETT! IT'S TOO HORRIBLE!



PERHAPS IT WAS THE FACT THAT OUR CHILDHOOD WAS MISERABLE... OUR PARENTS BEING POVERTY-STRIKEN! PERHAPS IT WAS THE FACT THAT I, JANET BENNETT, HAD REMAINED UNMARRIED, AND HAD CONTINUED TO LIVE WITH MY BROTHER GREGORY, THEREBY INCREASING HIS RESPONSIBILITIES! WHATEVER THE REASONS, GREG HAD SAUT HIMSELF OFF FROM THE WORLD TO STUDY... TO BETTER HIMSELF... HIS LIFE... AND MINE...

HIS DAYS OCCUPIED IN HIS REGULAR JOB, GREGORY SAT UP HALF THE NIGHT PORING OVER TEXT BOOKS! I KNEW THAT SUCH HARD WORK... CONSTANT STUDD... WOULD HAVE ITS EFFECT! HE GREW PALE... HIS EYES CLOZED...

GREGORY! YOU MUST GET SOME SLEEP!

LEAVE ME ALONE, SIS! I'LL BE ALL RIGHT...



GREGORY! YOU MUST STOP DROWNING YOURSELF! YOU WILL BECOME ILL...

I AM TAKING CARE OF MYSELF, JANET! DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME!



BUT I COULD NOT HELP BUT WORRY! GREGG'S CONDITION GREW PROGRESSIVELY WORSE! AT LAST I COULD RESIST NO LONGER! I BEGGED GREGG TO LET ME CALL IN OUR FAMILY DOCTOR!

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! LET THE OLD DOCT COME OVER AND EXAMINE ME IF IT WILL MAKE YOU ANY HAPPIER!

OH, YES, GREGG? YOU HAVE BEEN LOOKING RATHER SAD LATELY!



DR. WENTWORTH EXAMINED GREGG THOROUGHLY...AND AFTER HE HAD FINISHED, HE TOOK ME ASIDE!

THERE IS NOTHING REALLY WRONG WITH MR. MISS BENNETT? HE IS WORKING TOO HARD! HE EATS HASTILY, READS TOO LONG...AND SPORRIES! I WILL GIVE YOU A PRESCRIPTION WHICH OUGHT TO HELP!

THANK YOU, DOCTOR! I FEEL RELIEVED!



DR. WENTWORTH GAVE ME THE PRESCRIPTION, AND LEFT! GREGG INSISTED THAT THE PRESCRIPTION BE FILLED BY A CHEMIST IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, AN OLD MAN WHOSE SHOP WAS OLD TOO - OLD-FASHIONED AND DEVOID OF THE GLITTER OF THE MODERN DRUG STORE! AS I ENTERED THE SHOP...

YES, MADAM? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

I...I'D LIKE TO FILL THIS PRESCRIPTION!



THE OLD MAN TOOK THE SLIP OF PAPER IN HIS WITHERED, SONEY HANDS AND STUDIED IT FOR A MOMENT...

THIS PRESCRIPTION CONTAINS A RARE DRUG! I HOPE I HAVE SOME OF IT IF NOT... I'LL HAVE TO ORDER IT!

WELL THEN, WILL YOU DELIVER IT WHEN YOU HAVE MADE IT UP?



THAT EVENING, THE MEDICINE ARRIVED, AND I SAW THAT GREGG TOOK IT BEFORE DINNER!

THERE? DOES IT TASTE BAD?

RATHER TASTELESS! NOT TOO BAD, DID?



I WAS CAREFUL TO SEE THAT GREGG TOOK HIS MEDICINE BEFORE EVERY MEAL, AND THEN, ONE EVENING...

GREGG? YOU'RE NOT STUDYING.

I...I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT, TONIGHT, JANET!



HE BEGAN TO PACE THE FLOOR AS IF UNDECIDED WHAT TO DO WITH HIMSELF...AND THEN...

I THINK I'LL GO OUT TONIGHT, JANET? TAKE IN A SHOW? DON'T WAIT UP FOR ME...

OH... ALL RIGHT, GREGG!



I REACHED? AT LAST GREGG HAD BROKEN AWAY FOR AN EVENING OF RELAXATION? I WATCHED HIM AS HE SAUNTERED DOWN THE STREET? I DON'T KNOW WHAT TIME HE CAME IN... BUT THE NEXT MORNING, AT BREAKFAST, HIS EYES GLEAMED...

OH, GREGG? YOU LOOK SO WELL?

AND I FEEL IT, TOD? I HAD A GRAND TIME LAST NIGHT? MET SOME OLD COLLEGE CHUMS?



THAT NIGHT GREGG WENT OUT AGAIN, AND AGAIN THE NEXT NIGHT? HE WAS A CHANGED MAN... HE BECAME A LOVER OF PLEASURE... A HUNTER OF RESTAURANTS AND CRY PLACES? I WAS HAPPY AND YET... ALTHOUGH I KNOW NOT WHY I WAS FRIGHTENED...

WHY DO YOU LOOK AT ME SO STRANGELY, SIS? WHAT DO YOU SEE?

I... I DON'T KNOW, GREGG?



THE DAYS WENT BY AND GREGG CONTINUED TO TAKE HIS MEDICINE... READING THE PRESCRIPTION FROM THE OLD CHEMIST WHEN IT RAN OUT? ONE MORNING...

GREGG? I... I... WHAT? YOU SAY GOODBYE TO ME?

WHAT? YOU SAY SOMETHING, SIS?



HIS EYES FOLLOWED MY STARE? A FINGER... THE LITTLE FINGER OF HIS RIGHT HAND... WAS ALL WRINKLED AND WITHERED? IT LOOKED... LIKE IT WAS PUTTING AWAY...



GREGG QUICKLY WRAPPED THE HORRIBLE LOOKING DISK IN HIS HINDERBUSH? AND STAMMERED...

I... I BURNED IT... LET ME BANDAGE LAST NIGHT... I...

IT FOR YOU, GREGG?



HORROR FLOODED INTO GREGG'S EYES? HE JUMPED UP, DREW AWAY FROM MY OUTSTRETCHED HANDS.

NO? NO? I'LL DO IT UP MYSELF? LEAVE ME BE...

WHY... GREGG?



THAT NIGHT, AFTER GREGG WENT OUT, I CALLED ON WENTWORTH... BUT HE HAD GONE OUT OF TOWN? HE WOULD NOT BE BACK TILL MORNING? I SAT STARING OUT OF THE WINDOW... AND ABOUT MID-NIGHT I WAS AWAKENED BY THE KEY IN THE LOCK...

GREGG? WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOUR HAND?

I... I CUT IT? WHY DO YOU SAY?





I CANNOT DESCRIBE THE FEAR THAT CREEPT INTO MY HEART AS GREGG SNAPPED AT ME! THERE WAS A STRANGE LOOK IN HIS EYES! A LOOK I HAD NEVER SEEN BEFORE!

I AM GOING TO MY ROOM! BRING MY BREAKFAST TRAY UP IN THE MORNING AND LEAVE IT AT THE DOOR!



THE NEXT MORNING, I FOLLOWED GREGG'S INSTRUCTIONS, LEAVING HIS TRAY! THEN I RUSHED OVER TO SEE DR. WERTWORTH.

MY DEAR! YOU SAY HE *STILL* TAKES THE STUFF! YES! REGULARLY!



WELL, WHERE DOES HE HAVE THE PRESCRIPTION FILE OF AT THE OLD CHEMIST'S ON BROOK STREET.



DR. WERTWORTH BOY HIS COAT AND WE HURRIED TO THE OLD-FASHION CHEMIST SHOP! THE OLD MAN GREETED US AND THE DOCTOR PROCEEDED TO ASK SOME QUESTIONS.

OH, YES! MR. BENNETT HAS BEEN IN REGULARLY TO FILL THAT PRESCRIPTION! CONTAINS A RARE DRUG WHICH I'LL HAVE TO ORDER, NOW! I ONLY HAD A LITTLE HAD IT A LONG TIME TOO.



HMM! LET ME SEE THE DRUG YOU USED, SIR!

THE OLD MAN WENT INTO THE BACK AND RETURNED WITH A MUSTY CARBIDE, WHICH HE PREPARED FOR THE DOCTOR.

PHEN! WHAT IS THIS? THIS IS NOT WHAT I PRESCRIBED! ON YES, I SEE THE LABEL IS RIGHT, BUT I TELL YOU THIS IS NOT THE DRUG!



I... I... I'VE HAD IT FOR SOME TIME. MAYBE A FEW YEARS! I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!

THE DOCTOR TOOK THE CARBIDE, AND WE LEFT...

DOCTOR WERTWORTH! I SHOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT MY BROTHER HAS BEEN TAKING FOR THE PAST MONTH OR SO.



FRANKLY, MISS BENNETT, I DO NOT KNOW! I SHALL HAVE IT ANALYZED BUT I HAVE A FEELING THAT THIS GOES BEYOND THE REALM OF CHEMISTRY AND MEDICAL SCIENCE!

THAT EVENING MY BROTHER GREGG DID NOT GO OUT AS USUAL! HE CAME DOWN FROM HIS ROOM AND ANNOUNCED...

I HAVE HAD MY LITTLE FLING, BUT NOW IT IS OVER! I AM GOING BACK TO MY BOOKS! I DO NOT WANT TO BE DISTURBED! I WILL REMAIN IN MY ROOM. MY MEALS WILL BE SENT UP AND LEFT OUTSIDE! IS THAT CLEAR?



YES, GREGG!

GREGG WENT BACK TO HIS ROOM, AND THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN I PLACED HIS BREAKFAST TRAY BEFORE THE DOOR...

GREGG! BREAKFAST!

LEAVE IT AND GO!



I STARTED DOWNSTAIRS, AND THEN REMEMBERED SOMETHING I WANTED FROM MY BEDROOM AS I STARTED BACK...

YOU'RE SPYING ON ME!  
I DON'T WANT YOUR SPYING  
OF ME!

GREGG! YOUR ARMS!  
THEY'RE ALL BANDAIDED!



I RUSHED TO HIM, BUT HE PICKED UP HIS TRAY AND SLAMMED HIS DOOR... LOOKING AT IT...

DR. GREGG?... SOB... GREGG!



I WENT DOWNSTAIRS, AND CALLED THE DOCTOR...

ANY NEWS,  
DOCTOR?

I'VE SENT IT OFF,  
MISS BENNETT! IT  
WILL BE ABOUT A  
WEEK BEFORE WE  
KNOW!



WHEN I DID NOT SEE GREGG FOR SEVERAL DAYS, I CALLED DR. WENTWORTH AGAIN... AND TOLD HIM OF GREGG'S WRINKLED, ROTTED FINGER... HIS BANDAIDED HAND AND HIS BANDAIDED ARMS...

I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM THE LABORATORY YET, MISS BENNETT, BUT I THINK I'D BETTER COME OVER...

YES...  
DOCTOR!



DR. WENTWORTH ARRIVED AND WENT UPSTAIRS! I HEARD HIM RING AND GO IN! AFTER A WHILE HE CAME DOWNSTAIRS! THERE WAS UNPUNTERABLE HORROR IN HIS EYES! HE GULPED... STEADYING HIMSELF BY GRASPING THE BANISTER...

I HAVE SEEN HIM! ONCE I HAVE EXAMINED HIM! AND I AM IN MY SENSES! I HAVE DEALT WITH DEATH! MY LIFE... BUT I... NEVER... NOTHING... LIKE THIS... NO, NO!



HE COVERED HIS FACE WITH HIS HANDS AS IF TO SHUT OUT A HORRID SIGHT... AND THEN HE TURNED!

DO NOT SEND FOR ME AGAIN,  
MISS BENNETT! I CAN DO  
NOTHING IN THIS HOUSE!

BUT... DOCTOR...  
DOCTOR!



THE NEXT DAY, AS I WAS CROSSING THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE, I HAPPENED TO GAZE UP AT GREEN'S WINDOW.

WHA... OH-BASP!



THE BLIND WAS BEING DRAWN BACK, NOT BY A HAND, BUT A ROTTED STUMP. A BEAST'S PAW SHAPELESS HORRIBLE! AND BEHIND IT, TWO EYES OF BURNING FLAME GLARED AT ME AMIDST SOMETHING AS FORMLESS AS GHASTLY AS THE ROTTING PAW.



I CALLED DR. WENTWORTH AS SOON AS I GOT INTO THE HOUSE... AND, ALTHOUGH AT FIRST HE REFUSED, MY FRIGHTENED TEARS FINALLY PERSUADED HIM TO COME? WE SAT DOWN IN THE SITTING ROOM...

THE CHEMIST I SENT THE DRUG TO WAS *UNABLE TO ANALYSE IT!* IT'S CHEMICAL COMPOSITION WAS UNKNOWN TO HIM ALTHOUGH THE RESULTS OF TESTS SHOWED THAT IT WAS SIMILAR IN ACTION TO THE *DIGESTIVE ENZYMES* IN THE HUMAN BODY! YOUR BROTHER IS *STILL UNDELETED ALIVE!*

SOMETHING WET HAD FALLEN ON MY HAND! I LOOKED UP! THE GELING WAS BLACK AND DRIPPING...

THAT... THAT'S GREEN'S ROOM UP THERE!

SO BOOM... SO BOOM! STAY HERE!

EEEEER!

PLEASE, DOCTOR, YOU MUST TELL ME WHAT IS WRONG WITH GREEN!

I AM AFRAID, MISS BENNETT, THAT THIS WHOLE EPISODE IS MOST UNNATURAL! THERE ARE FORCES INVOLVED HERE... SUPERNATURAL FORCES... THAT WE TODAY KNOW LITTLE ABOUT!



DR. WENTWORTH CRASSED HIS WALKING CANE AND HASTENED UP THE STAIRS? IMOVING HIS ORDERS TO REMAIN IN THE SITTING ROOM, I FOLLOWED? AS HE DIVING DOWN THE DOOR, THERE GAVE FORTH A FEARFUL SCREAM... NOT A HUMAN VOICE, BUT MORE LIKE THAT OF AN ANIMAL...

THERE IT IS... IN THE CORNER... OH, NO...



THERE UPON THE FLOOR WAS A DARK PATRID MASS... NEITHER... NEITHER LIQUID NOR SOLID. BUBBLING... AND OUT OF THE MOST OF IT SHOWN TWO BURNING POINTS, LIKE EYES? AS THE THING GURSED FOR US, DR. WENTWORTH TEARS IN HIS EYES... STRUCK AT IT WITH HIS CANE... AGAIN AND AGAIN... UNTIL IT LIVED NO MORE!



THE END

IN THE SPRING...



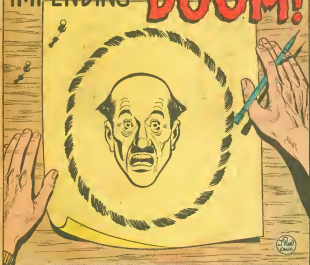
...A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY...



...AGHLY TURNING TO THOUGHTS OF...



# IMPENDING DOOM!



LUVVA HINEY! WILL YOU LOOK AT THIS? WHY IN THE WORLD DID I DRAW THIS FACE? I DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE I WAS DOING IT! FUNNY THE EXPRESSION IS ONE OF EXTREME... FEAR!



SURE IS STRANGE! MUST HAVE BEEN DAYDREAMING! MY MIND WAS A MILLION MILES AWAY! BUT WHY, ON SUCH A LOVELY DAY, WOULD I DRAW SUCH A HORRIFIED FACE?



OH, WELL... NO USE WORRYING ABOUT IT! GOOSH, IT'S A SWELL DAY! TOO NICE A DAY TO WORK! THINK I'LL TAKE A WALK!



SOMETIME LATER...

... GOES A PERSON GOOD TO GET SOME CLEAN, FRESH AIR... SUNSHINE! I'VE WALKED A GOOD FIVE MILES AND I DON'T FEEL A BIT TIRED!



YES, SIR! NOTHING LIKE THE GREAT OUTDOORS! NATURE SURE IS WONDERFUL... YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AN ARTIST TO APPRECIATE IT! SAY... WHAT'S THAT NOISE?



SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE BANGING... OR HAMMERING ON SOMETHING! OH OVER THERE... A HOUSE!



HMM... ALEX KORDOVA... GRAVE-STONES! NICE CHEERFUL OCCURSION! SOUNDS LIKE THAT NOISE IS COMING FROM AROUND IN BACK!

CLANK! CLANK!

UNIQUE  
STONECUTTING  
GRAVESTONES

ALEX KORDOVA  
PROP.

YES, I WAS RIGHT! THERE HE IS WORKING ON A GRAVESTONE! THESE MUST BE SAMPLES OF HIS WORK! NICE DESIGN!

HE'S MAKING SO MUCH NOISE, HE DOESN'T KNOW I'M HERE! WELL, THE MAN KNOWS HIS STUFF... HE'S GOOD! WHAT'S HE WORKING ON NOW?

CLANK

HMM... LET'S SEE! HERE LIES THEODORE J. WARREN?! ??? WHY THAT'S MY NAME! "BORN APRIL 25, 1922." HOLY SMOKE! I WANT A CLOSER LOOK AT THAT GRAVESTONE!

"BORN APRIL 25, 1922  
DIED JUNE 9, 1950!"

HEY!

BORN APRIL 25, 1922  
DIED JUNE 9, 1950



**GOOD LORD!** THIS IS FANTASTIC!  
YOUR FACE! YOU ARE THE MAN I  
DREW! WHAT'S GOING ON? *AM*  
*I DREAMING?*



MAYBE SO, BUT  
YOU HAVE MY *DATE*  
OF DEATH AS JUNE  
9, 1950! THAT'S  
*THAT'S TODAY!*  
AND THEN THERE'S  
THAT PICTURE  
I DREW.

THERE ISN'T ANYTHING TO  
GET EXCITED ABOUT! I  
JUST PUT TODAY'S DATE  
BECAUSE I'M GOING TO  
FINISH IT TODAY! LIKE  
AN ARTIST DATES HIS  
CANVAS WHEN HE FINISHES  
A PAINTING! WHAT'S THAT  
YOU SAID ABOUT A PICTURE?



THERE'S MORE TO  
THIS THAN JUST  
*COINCIDENCE!*  
I... I DON'T KNOW  
WHAT IT MEANS,  
BUT IT'S... IT'S  
LIKE AN *OMEN*  
OR SOMETHING!

*BOSS!* I'LL ADMIT IT'S ODD,  
ALL RIGHT! BUT I DON'T  
BELIEVE IN SUCH A THING  
AS *FATE* OR ANYTHING LIKE  
IT! SAY, COME ON IN THE  
HOUSE! MY WIFE WOULD  
LIKE TO SEE THIS  
PICTURE!



THAT HEADSTONE!  
THAT'S *MY* NAME  
AND *MY* DATE OF  
BIRTH! WHAT  
MADE YOU PUT  
*MY* NAME AND  
BIRTH-DATE ON  
THAT THING?



*YOUR* NAME? HMM. THAT'S  
QUITE A COINCIDENCE! BUT  
DON'T WORRY, MISTER.  
THIS IS JUST A SAMPLE I'M  
DOING! YOU KNOW, TO SHOW  
PEOPLE WHAT KIND OF  
WORK I DO!

HERE! LOOK AT THIS!  
IS THIS A DRAWING OF  
YOU, OR ISN'T IT?

WELL, I'LL BE DARNED!  
SURE IS *ME*, ALL RIGHT!  
YOU DIDN'T MAKE ME  
LOOK ANY TOO HAPPY,  
DID YOU?



THE ODDEST  
THING JUST  
HAPPENED,  
DEAR! I  
WAS

*TED!*

WHAT...?  
*ELLEN!*







HOW, SEE HERE? I'VE HAD JUST ABOUT ALL I CAN TAKE

LOOK AT YOU! A MISERABLE WRETCH! YOU'LL NEVER BE ANYTHING BUT WHAT YOU ARE! A DUMB GRAVESTONE GUTTER! TED'S A SUCCESS! HE HAS MONEY! HE'S YOUNG, HANDSOME, EXCITING! YOU'RE NONE OF THOSE THINGS!



I'VE HAD ENOUGH! I'M GOING OUT TO MY WORK SHOP! THERE ARE SOME THINGS I WANT TO DO!

GO AHEAD, RUN, YOU SPINELESS SNAKE! FOR ALL I CARE YOU CAN GO OUT AND NEVER COME BACK!



OH-H, THAT MAN! HE AGGRAVATES ME TO DEATH! I CAN'T STAND HIM ANY MORE! ESPECIALLY SINCE I'VE MET FRED AGAIN... TEDDY...

AH... ELLEN... PERHAPS IT'S BETTER TO LEAVE...



NO, TED... DON'T GO! ALEX WON'T BE BACK FOR HOURS! AND WE HAVE TO TALK ABOUT OLD TIMES! REMEMBER?

YES... BUT... OH, THERE'S NO USE KIDDING MYSELF. ELLEN I AM GLAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN! BUT YOU'RE MARRIED.



FORGET ABOUT ALEX, TED? JUST THINK OF FRED... AND ME! IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME BUT YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN HAVE YOU, TED? YOU COULDN'T FORGET ME!

NO, NO, TED! I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN! THOSE NIGHTS... YOUR KISSES...



I WAS CRAZY TO MARRY ALEX! I'VE KNOWN ALL ALONG THAT IT WAS FRED I WANTED! AND YOU WANT ME TOO! I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR EYES! IT'S NOT TOO LATE... WE CAN STILL BE TOGETHER! KISS ME, TED! KISS ME HARD!

ELLEN... IT'S NOT RIGHT! YOUR HUSBAND...



KISS ME!

I... OH, ELLEN, ELLEN...









